

INTRO: What led me to think about the Christian Hope
The man afraid to die.
The woman who died in the Lord.
See. Coats faith & hope,

The gospel of Christ is essentially a gospel of hope.

1. Jesus both defines hope and urges it upon us when he says, "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

A desire with the expectation that it will be realized. A belief that what you long for is obtainable.

It is hope that makes us look ahead with longing hearts and that urges us forward to obtain it. The Past is dead; only the Future is a live wire.

2. Paul represents the gospel of Hope. "Forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forward to the things that are before, I press on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

I. Hope in the Old and New Testaments.

1. The O.T. has lots of hope in it.

Ps. 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord.

Ecc. 9:4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope."

Jeremiah "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."

And how Israel did hope for the coming of the Christ!

2. But the N.T. is nearly all hope.

- a) No other writings in all literature opens up the future as does the N.T.
- b) No other message presses a man to go forward and upward as does the N.T. message.

"Forward, March!" is the N.T. command

"Over the top" the N.T. objective.

- c) Under the spell of the N.T. the world has made its most rapid progress. The Xn world leads the heathen world in all matters of civilization because Xty is essentially a religion of hope.

II. Our Xn Hope fills us with joy.

- 1. A hopeful person is a happy person, but not all hope ends in joy. Pro. 10:28 "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish."

Many a man's hope when realized leaves him forlorn and unhappy, but the hope of X in one's heart gives joy and gladness unspeakable. If you are not a hopeful Xn and consequently a happy Xn, something is still the matter with you.

III. Our Xn Hope gives us patience.

- 1. The impatience of Xns does not come from the hope that X gives them. It comes from something else--from their meager sense of justice, sometimes; from their hypocritical exactingness, perhaps; or from their tyrannical consciences; because all hope makes us patient, causing us to watch and wait for our expectation to come.

~~2. But, oh, how lacking in patience we are often, both with ourselves and with other Xns. And how foolish such impatience is!~~

2. We have patience with all other development; with our trees and flowers, with our babies, with our education. Trees and babies must be given time to grow. They can assimilate the air and sunshine and water and food but a little at a time. A mind cannot be cultured in a day, it takes time to cultivate a mind.

But a character, a personality, a soul, a spiritual life is much more difficult to develop than a tree or a child (physically speaking), or a mind. Look how long it takes to train a common soldier, how long to develop a general. Why shouldn't it take longer still to develop a soldier of Jesus Christ whose warfare is spiritual and whose enemies are a legion of evil forces hidden but leagued, and whose temptations are many and subtle?

3. But oh, how lacking in patience we are, both with ourselves and with other Xns! And how foolish such impatience is!

a) The teacher who rapped our knuckles for not writing correctly.

b) Suppose I would condemn the fruit trees just planted because they did not immediately bear fruit? Or the baby because it did not immediately become a man?

c) Suppose I would begin practicing the piano, but because my fingers refused to obey me readily I would beat my hands and cut them off and cast them away? You would say that I was crazy? But why any more so than when I call myself a miserable old sinner because I can't understand the whole Bible at once, or my conscience a tricky, filthy old thing because it refuses to work according to God's standards? Why shouldn't

I be called crazy when I condemn some fellow Xn because he does'nt conduct himself as a perfect Xn should? We patiently wait for perfection in every other direction; then why not in Xn living and practice? Our Xn hope should make us patient with our spiritual selves and with one another as Xns.

Have you a fiery temper? Be patient with it until you can use its fire to do a good piece of work for God. Have you a wagging tongue? Be patient with it until you can spread the goodness and love and hope of Christ with it ~~and~~ instead of dirty gossip. Have you pride? Be patient with it until you can express Xn dignity and honor with it instead of letting it prevent you from forgiving that good friend of yours whom you think has hurt you. Or perhaps these Xn disgraces in somebody else makes it impossible for you to get along with them or to stand them at all. Why should you be impatient with such an one when God is not?

IV. Our Christian Hope saves us.

Romans 8:24,25 "For by hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

1. Any preaching of the Gospel of X without hope in it is not preaching the whole gospel.

a) Some have pictured God and the angels up in heaven rejoicing over the writhings of the damned down in hell and called it the gospel of X.

b) Others have represented God as predestinating a few to everlasting life and

condemning all others to hell forever
 calling it the gospel, the "Good News",
 2. Our knowledge will pass away, likewise
 our judgments and prophecies and inter-
 pretations, but there abideth these three
 Faith, Hope, and Love. A Gospel that
 leaves out either one of the three is
 no gospel at all.

3. The three, faith and hope and love,
 work together to save a man.

a) The young man who stole money from
 his mother to smoke and drink like
 other boys did.

The strained attitudes at the table
 He soon suspicioned that his parents
 knew of his doings and expected pun-
 ishment.

The father calls him into his study
 "Every man that hath this hope in him
 purifieth himself even as he is pure."

4. *Some flowers bloom early & die - others later - the same nature
 same for all - Some of us die young - others older - the same
 Conclusion: god always provides care for us all.*

1. The one remaining thing in Pandora's
 box--HOPE.

The one thing Alexander the Great kept
 for himself--hope.

2. Riding on the turtles in southern seas.
 By keeping its head up with a stick it
 cannot dive under the water. It is
 hope that keeps us from sinking and
 enables us to push ahead.

3. The reward offered for the recovery of
 the lost anchor. \$250. What the anchor
 is to the ship during a raging storm
 hope is to a Xn during the storms of li
 life. "Which hope we have as an anchor
 of the soul, both sure and steadfast."
 Heb. 6:19